

# REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



**To:** Park Board

**Agenda Item #:** V.B.

**From:** Susan Faus  
Assistant Parks & Recreation Director

**Action** ☒

**Discussion** ☐

**Date:** February 11, 2014

**Information** ☐

**Subject:** PUBLIC HEARING - Seasonal Off-Leash Dog Area at Strachauer Park

## Action Requested:

Approve Seasonal Off-Leash Area at Strachauer Park as a permanent seasonal amenity

## Information / Background:

The Park Board approved a seasonal off-leash dog area (OLA) at Strachauer Park on a trial basis at the Park Board meeting on May 14, 2013. The intent behind adding an off-leash area was to provide a convenient location for dog owners living in the neighborhood to enjoy. After a season of evaluation, and hearing positive feedback from residents who utilize the off-leash area, staff recommends that the off-leash area become a permanent amenity at the park during the months of April – October.

City staff monitored the OLA through the trial period. Specific details being observed were:

- Reports of excessive barking from dogs in the OLA
- Evidence of owners not picking up dog waste
- Increase in vehicle traffic at the park

We were thrilled with the results. No citations were issued for violations relating to the OLA policies regarding dog licenses or permits. The city did not receive any confirmed complaints for excessive barking. Staff did not observe an increase in vehicle traffic. Park maintenance staff reported that dog owners were fulfilling their responsibility and picking up waste inside the OLA. The city provided a dog waste container and bags were donated by Scoopy Poo.

The city has seen an increase in the number of OLA permits issued. In 2012, between the months of April – October, the city issued 83 OLA permits compared to 255 in 2013. Although we do not have specific documentation indicating which OLA people are requesting a permit to use, the numbers do support an increased use of OLA in Edina. Currently, dog licenses and OLA permits are managed by the Police Department under the Animal Control Division.

Making the OLA at Strachauer Park a permanent amenity would reinforce an on-going community effort to sustain, enhance and grow the quality of life for resident pet owners.

## ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Neighborhood Notification and Public Hearing Letter



January 8, 2014

Dear Neighbor of Strachauer Park:

As you may recall, the Park Board approved a seasonal off-leash dog area at Strachauer Park on a trial basis at the Park Board meeting on May 14, 2013. The intent behind adding an off-leash area was to provide a convenient location for dog owners that live in the neighborhood to enjoy.

We plan to make a proposal to endorse the seasonal off-leash dog area within the Strachauer Park hockey rink become a permanent amenity during the months of April - October. City staff will make the recommendation based on a season of evaluation and hearing positive feedback from residents in the neighborhood. The city has not received any complaints pertaining to the off-leash dog area. The city has not issued any citations for individuals violating city codes or off-leash area permits and requirements. Overall, city staff observed that many of the users of the off-leash area were neighbors that walked over to the park, which was one objective of the off-leash area.

If you wish to share your views on this proposal please submit your comments in writing either by postal mail or email and address the letter to the Edina Park Board at my postal or email address shown below. You are invited to attend the Park Board meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Edina City Hall. If you have any questions about the proposed permanent seasonal off-leash dog area, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Susan Faus, Assistant Director  
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